



Designing Organizations for Collaborative Relationships: the Amenability of Social Capital to Inter-Agency Collaboration in the Graduate Employment Context in Uganda

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Abstract

This paper discusses organizational social capital with the view that its amenability to collaboration creates trust, mutuality and reciprocal relational values upon which organizations may synchronize their efforts to create graduate employment opportunities. We adopted a cross-sectional survey design with both quantitative and qualitative approaches. We conveniently collected data from staff and leaders of four organizations which were purposely selected to represent a cross-section of government, private and civil society organizations whose mandate touches on the employability of university graduates in the country in very direct ways. From a sample of 175 respondents, we received 105 filled questionnaires, representing a response rate of 62%. We observed that the extent to which the social capital components of trust, mutuality and reciprocal relations were amenable to interagency collaboration were low to sufficiently permit collaborative relationships upon which synergy between agencies would enhance the creation of graduate employment opportunities. The implication of this study is that we have been trained to foster self-sufficiency, individual competence, individual brilliance and independence through the pursuance of individual goals and actions. This greatly affects the trust, mutuality and reciprocal relationships that people/organizations develop with one another, consequently denying societies or organizations the opportunity to tap into the synergistic capital that would help people or organizations tackle the challenges that are beyond their individual capabilities.

Keywords Trust · Reciprocity · Mutuality · Collaboration · Graduate employment · Uganda

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Introduction

Goal eight of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires that nations promote inclusive economic growth and productivity that will ensure decent employment opportunities for their people by the year 2030. This calls for high levels of investment and innovativeness in the manufacturing, mining, technology, agro-processing and the service industries with the expectation that they will create employment opportunities for people (Waddell, 2017). The assumption of inclusive growth is that, when there is sufficient investment in different sectors of the economy, a number of economic activities will suffice which increases the demand for both trained and non-trained labor, hence creating jobs for people (Stiglitz, 2003). Indeed, some countries, especially the developed ones are on track to achieving goal eight of the SDGs because of the rigorous multi-sector investments their governments have undertaken in the past two decades (Wong, 2019). In Germany, unemployment declined from 5.7% to 5.4% in 2018 which is the lowest level of unemployment since the German reunification in 1990 (DW made for minds; Economic boom drives German unemployment to historic lows, 2018), in USA, unemployment declined to 3.8%, a 49-year low in 2018 since 1969. Canada's unemployment declined from 6% to 5.5% in 2018 (Hoffmann & Lemieux, 2016). In developing countries, multi-sector investments have increased the number of economic activities from which a number of jobs have been created. In Uganda, investment in the education sector, youth livelihood programs, National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), National Export Schemes etc. have created enabling environment in which jobs have been created, thereby reducing the unemployment gap. This performance is in tandem with scholars such as Bryson et al. (2015) and Ngai and Pissarides (2007) whose argument confirms that development and the subsequent creation of employment opportunities are a function of multi sector growth.

Despite the heavy multi-sector investment, recent data indicates that the global economic growth (GDP per capita growth) slowed down between 2010 and 2018 from 2% to 1.5% in 2019. The major GDP per capita growth boosters such as tourism, manufacturing, agro-processing, construction, the services sector and infrastructure development which employs a greater number of people were facing unprecedented challenges which according to United Nations, the situation was likely to accelerate if smart investments in economic, societal and institutional resilience which would create synergistic societal, national and global businesses were not thought about as remedies for addressing widening unemployment for all categories of people (World Economic Situation and Prospects, 2021). When the Covid-19 pandemic hit the World in late 2019, it found highly disjointed and vulnerable economies thereby plunging the World into the worst economic recession since the great depression (Arthi & Parman, 2021).

The inference here is that multi-sectoral investment may not sufficiently and sustainably create the required employment opportunities if synergistic approaches are not part of the equation. While the developed countries seem to benefit from different other levers from which societal problems may be solved, the cultural, historical and institutional selfish priorities of the developing countries seem to disadvantage them from solving their societal needs. For example, Whajah et al. (2019) urges that solving societal problems such as creating employment opportunities may not easily be achieved if the responsible organizations remain walled off from one another either due to their historical and cultural constraints or due to their selfish interests as opposed to collective needs. This is with the consequences of: 1) duplication of effort, when different organizations do the same things albeit unjustifiably and with wastage of scarce resources (Andrews et al., 2017); 2) contradiction of effort,

when different organizations undo each other's contributions to the creation of employment opportunities for graduates (Katzenbach & Smith, 2015); 3) leaving gaps/conflicts, when interventions that are key to alleviation of the graduate unemployment problem are not implemented because each of the organizations fighting graduate unemployment thinks that the other organizations are implementing these interventions when in fact this is not the case; and 4) inadequate funding for individual organizations, when the central government and international funding bodies find it inadequate and unattractive to finance the activities of the disparate functions of different agencies; 5) Lack of knowledge sharing, when organizations fail to share their experiences in management, finances, operations etc. due to internal and external legal and other procedural prohibitions. The ultimate consequence of all these gaps is the absence of synergy between the actors which affects the activities that would accelerate the creation of employment opportunities among the educated youths (Salin et al., 2013). This suggests that in order to achieve inclusive economic growth from which decent employment opportunities may be created, there is need to break organizational boundaries to allow collective decision making, sharing of logical and physical resources, creation of trust and mutuality from the actors, as well as inclusive negotiations from all the concerned stakeholders. These collaborative actions will create synergy from which the involved stakeholders will create employment opportunities for the youth graduates (Carroll et al., 2020).

It is important to note however, that organizations operate in different historical and cultural domains. They have different identities, cultures, mandates, norms and practices and therefore, it may not be easy to rally them for collective thinking and pursuance of collective agendas even when they lack individual capacities to achieve their individual organizational goals (Hecht, 2020). However, it has been empirically tested by several scholars and practitioners that when social capital norms of trust, reciprocity and mutuality are present, organizations are more likely to think and work together for collective goals even when they are historically, culturally and structurally different (Vangen et al., 2015). For example; the Silicon Valley business community couldn't create enough jobs until they were re-organized through the Joint Venture Silicon Valley (JVSV) (Lieberman, 2004). The collaboration of the 3 large employment organizations (community colleges, the JOBS Council, and the Employment Division) was instrumental in the creation of employment opportunities for the people of Oregon State (Linden et al., 2003). These examples and several others from the developed World seem to support the views that the synchronization of economic activities/programs through agency-collaboration creates a competitive advantage for organizations that may not have enough physical and cognitive resources to achieve not only their organizational goals but societal needs as well.

Developing countries such as Uganda presents a different picture. Its potential for economic growth was curtailed by more than 20 years of civil wars. This caused unemployment, poverty, insecurity, and diseases to rise among Ugandans and ultimately causing death of close to one million people (Khisra, 2020). In 1986, a new Government undertook a set of economic reforms such as the liberalization reforms, the privatization of state-owned corporations, the revenue collection reforms, the elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers and the investment code of 1991. As a result, Macroeconomic stability was eventually restored and the country was on a path of economic recovery (Henstridge & Kasekende, 2001). Since then, the government, with the support of development partners, the civil society and the private sector have not only invested in different economic sectors but have also come up with a number of policies all aimed at stabilizing the economy, consequently creating between 50,000 and 100,000 job opportunities every year (Booth et al., 2014). These activities include; incentivization of Foreign Direct Investments which

includes; free land, tax holidays, protection, and long-term loan subsidies (Obwona, 2001). Favorable policies such as tight monetary and fiscal policies, aimed at reducing inflation, lower borrowing and lending risks as well as managing exchange rates to enhance economic development (Omoshoro-Jones & Bonga-Bonga, 2020). There have been efforts to promote exports such that the common base industries such as agriculture and mining are boosted to sufficiently create jobs for the unemployed people (Ikhide, 2019).

Despite these efforts, however, the problem of graduate unemployment is still persistent, raising the question of why organizations working to solve the problem have been largely unsuccessful in their efforts. Although several reasons have been cited in response to this question, authors like Andriessen et al. (2011) suggest that it may be the consequence of their failure to work synergistically—a cogent hypothesis considering that the organizations do not only fail to work together but sometimes go as far as undoing each other's efforts (Wiedner & Ansari, 2019). Seen from Huxham et al. (2000)'s view that interagency collaboration requires organizations that are structured for collaboration; therefore, the persistent graduate unemployment problem in the country begs the question of how well the organizations responsible for alleviating it are socially built for collaboration. This study was conducted to respond to this question, taking the case of 4 organizations responsible for promoting employment opportunities in the country.

Informed by Coleman's (Coleman, 1988) social capital theory, the ability of organizations to manage beyond their individual capabilities lies in the social structure of the actors and is shaped by the way they associate with each other with the view that their close working relationship will create synergy between the partners which will ultimately empower them to identify and meet societies' collective needs. This association is made strong by interactions which are facilitated by relational connections or personal bonds which are established and maintained by the people and organizations participating in the collaboration. According to Ostrom (1990), these relational connections enhance collaboration strength, allowing it to form and function effectively. The quality of those relationships is determined by three primary factors: trust, reciprocity and mutuality which determines the extent to which collaboration exists between parties and their ability to solve issues of societal concern. Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1988), Gray (1989), Thomson et al. (2009) and several other scholars have appraised social capital in linking up the disparate agencies and how this linkage minimizes wastage of meagre resources, avoids the duplication of efforts and creates relational values that creates significant organizational knowledge (Adler & Heckscher, 2006). Unfortunately, we are not sure of the theoretical and practical applicability of these empirical studies especially in a developing country context like Uganda because the social, cultural, historical and development levels where these studies were conducted from are contextually different from ours. Secondly, some of the previous studies have studied interagency collaborations from homogenous organizations which are demand and supply side organizations from a labor supply and demand perspectives (Solansky & Beck, 2009), (Carpenter, 2009) and (Nixon-Cream, 2019) causing a gap in the interagency and graduate employment scholarship. Finally, and most important to this study is that there seems to be insufficient scholarship that measures the extent to which various actors are built/designed for collaboration with special reference to social capital and its components of trust, reciprocity and mutuality. Absence of this scholarship creates fears that whereas interagency collaboration means a lot elsewhere based on their social, cultural and historical backgrounds, the knowledge of it in our context is insufficient and the extent to which organizations or individuals are built for interagency collaboration is not well tested. It is therefore imperative to understand the extent to which these organizations are built to trust one another, reciprocate their relational values and the presence of

mutual relations among the actors with the consequence that the extent to which they trust each other, reciprocate and mutually relate to one another is the extent to which they collaborate and thus is the extent to which they are able to solve their collective problems such as graduate unemployment.

Literature Review

Organizational Trust and Interagency Collaboration for Graduate Employment Opportunities

Organizational trust is defined as the party's willingness to take vulnerability to the outcomes of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party (Hasnain, 2019). The confidence in the other party's benevolent behavior develops from the experience and belief that the trustee has earlier followed the same values and principles (Connell et al., 2003). As for Sako (1992), trust cannot be formed without a prior basis for it. It usually develops when two parties regularly comply with the same ethical or/and social norms and regulations. Trust is thus based on the positive expectation that each party will not be taken advantage of. It requires both parties to eliminate opportunistic behavior by removing unfavorable expectations and allowing favorable expectations to be seen as certain. According to Kuan and Bock (2007), the removal of unfavorable expectations creates trust which people or organizations can rely on for further cooperation.

The successful management of wildfires in Australia has been attributed to the long-term trust between several organizations that have synergistically worked together to save lives and tame the wildfire disasters. Organizations need to share strategies, manage operational risks, communicate across agencies, share resources, agree on operational designs and finally work together to achieve the intended objectives (Howes et al., 2015). As a result of collaboration, the Center for Disaster Management and Public Safety (CDMPS) was started at the University of Melbourne. This has not only created jobs for young scientists but converged them together for future research and innovations on the management of climate change (Aghakarim Alamdara, 2017). The success of the Urban Partnership Program (UPP) whose aim was to reduce traffic congestion in Minneapolis area was attributed to the mutual trust between different key stakeholders that allowed them to collaborate towards a collective agenda. Consequently, a number of people were employed and continue to get jobs for people in the areas of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes, congestion/value pricing, dynamic message signs, sanpass, ramp metering and other lane management signage (Shomar, 2019).

However, according to Mishan and Prangley (2014), development of trust is sometimes determined by a number of contextual factors. These may include; education levels, professional experience, well developed governance systems, administrative structures, environmental factors, funds availability and public interest. Muhairwe (2009), confirms that Uganda's organizations are built on hierarchical, command and control structures, whose support for relational building is very negligible and thus social capital development between parties is not highly embraced unless sanctioned by the top leadership. It is for this reason that Musila (2019) found out that the failure of Uganda Communications Commission to cooperate with the Broadcasting council, the Broadcast media and the National Information & Technology Authority accounted for the failure of very many broadcasting

opportunities in the country. Failure of these organizations to collaborate with one another is attributed to inadequate trust between different organizations. However, as seen through Ntale et al. (2020) lenses, most of Uganda's organizations are hierarchical and highly centralized meaning that decision making is exclusive to the top organs, there is high power distance and above all there are rules and regulations that bars people from interacting with one another. One would therefore wonder whether organizations built in this will promote trust amongst each other to a level that allows them collaborate with one another to solve problems that collectively affect them.

We therefore hypothesize;

H¹ The extent to which trust is amenable to inter-agency collaboration is the extent to which organizations may create employment opportunities for graduates.

Organizational Reciprocity and Interagency Collaboration for Graduate Employment Opportunities

Reciprocity is defined as the shared benefit each collaborating member gets as a result of the mutual relationship (Huxham & Vangen, 2013). Reciprocity is regarded as one of the key ingredients that can cement a long-lasting relationship between the collaborating agencies (Fournier, 1998; Baggozi, 1995). According to Konovsky and Pugh (1994) positive and beneficial engagements with organizations or employees contribute to the establishment of high-quality exchange relationships that create obligations for employees/organizations to reciprocate in positive, beneficial ways (e.g., Eisenberger et al., 1986; Shore & Wayne, 1993). According to Cohen and Bradford (1989), individuals or organizations can use exchange currencies to exchange knowledge. People will gain power if they can offer what others need such as; cooperation, information, skills, contacts, reputation, recognition, importance, acceptance and understanding. Indeed, a study conducted by Knight et al. (2008) found out that international student associations were able to lobby placements for their members in the United States of America when they engaged in reciprocal interactions with the universities/colleges. According to Bardach et al. (2017), the Sharing of information, resources, labor market strategies and physical resources (reciprocal relationship) between the 15 district offices and the 3 big employment organizations were crucial in reducing the unemployment of youth in Oregon State. However, as noted by Wunsch et al. (2019), reciprocal relationship survives in organizations that are designed to promote interactionism, inclusivity and low power distance. They argue that reciprocity is a relational and interactive norm that develops through interpersonal connections between people either within or across different organizations. Therefore, organizational structures should be able to support this relational interaction if the reciprocal interactions are to be supported. However, according to Olowu (2003), organizational structures in developing countries like Uganda are made in such a way that relational interactions which gives rise to reciprocity are difficult to achieve among organizational members. Ntale et al. (2020), attributes this to the centralized and formalized nature of Uganda's organizations which makes it difficult for members to initiate and promote reciprocal relations. Trojer et al. (2014) had earlier confirmed that Uganda's institutions of higher learning were autonomous in nature consequently disabling the initiation of any reciprocal exchanges which would support collaboration. The consequence of this is that employers and employees were denied a

chance to get and share timely and useful labor market information, available opportunities and the labor market trends which affects the graduate employment process. Therefore, we hypothesize that;

H² The extent to which reciprocity dimension is amenable to inter-agency collaboration is the extent to which organizations may create employment opportunities for graduates.

Organization Mutuality and Inter-Agency Collaboration

Mutuality is the sharing of a feeling, action, or relationship between two or more parties (Park & Schumacher, 2014). To share a feeling or action, parties must negotiate and agree on a number of things that bring them together. Therefore, mutuality looks at consensus building and stronger cooperation, in terms of systems, processes, interactions, communication and decision making among the collaborating partners (Cropper, 1996). For organizations to achieve this, they must experience mutually beneficial interdependencies that are grounded on either differing interests or on shared interests. This is what Zimet et al. (1990) calls “complementarities” on shared interests, which are usually based on homogeneity or an appreciation and passion for issues that go beyond an individual organization’s mission. Complementarity describes a situation in which “parties to a network agree to forego the right to pursue their own interests at the expense of others” (Powell 1990, 303). It occurs when one party has unique resources (skills, expertise, or money) that another party needs or could benefit from (and vice versa). When there is mutual relationship between organizations, there will be sharing of resources between those who have and those who are less privileged with the hope that each of the partnering organizations can bring something on table which can enable the collaboration to move forward. The mutual relationship created between the weak and the strong actors create synergy that can resourcefully tackle the present and future challenges (Thomson et al., 2009).

Therefore, the mutuality dimension is the foundation upon which deeper relational integration is experienced. The depth of this relationships defines the extent to which organizations will share information, collectively mobile finances, share knowledge and create synergy that will be used against any societal problem such as graduate unemployment. However, mutual interdependencies do not survive in hierarchical and centralized environments. This is because, such organizations are structured in ways that promote high power distance, exclusive decision making and less involvement of people, typical of Uganda’s organizations (Muhairwe, 2009). Therefore, one wonders whether societal problems such as graduate unemployment can be minimized if organizations that are meant to do it are made in ways that are not mutually responsive to one another. Given this literature, we hypothesize that;

- *H³ the extent to which mutuality as a social capital dimension is amenable to inter-agency collaboration is the extent to which organizations may create employment opportunities for graduates*

Vignette 1 = the case of trust, reciprocity and mutuality in the Silicon Valley of California

Home to more than seven thousand technology-based companies (Cisco systems, Hewlett-Packard, and the Intel, among others) that employ more than 2 million people, this region provides a descent quality of life to more than 3 million people. However, the 1991–92 recession hit Silicon Valley hard from which they lost forty thousand jobs, the real estate market slumped and job growth was flat. In January 1992 the San Jose Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce created a “coalition of partners” called Joint Venture Silicon Valley (JVSV) consisting of region’s major business organizations. The purpose was to bring the business community together, get a common identity, and create more jobs. A study to understand the region’s economy was commissioned. The resulting report, “An Economy at Risk,” identified the region’s warning signs and documented immediate and long-term problems. It got people’s attention, as did a JVSV conference held in June 1992 which was attended by over a thousand regional leaders to discuss the report and find solutions.

Disjointedness of the community members due mis-trust and reciprocal mutual interactions were the identified problems which killed the markets, suffocated innovation, and diffused synergy, hence unable to create employment opportunities. The conclusion was that without forging mutual trust and interactive relations, societal problems will never be known and solved. The first step to create trust was to ensure that all community members from 27 cities were all represented. Sharing of knowledge and physical resources to ensure that the collaboration objectives, goals and benefits are well understood and that members commit their physical and psychological energy on the collaboration.

With these measures in place, the JVSV was able to win trust, mutual and reciprocal relationship of the business community. The joint efforts created synergy which saw JVSV winning major federal projects which created many jobs for people within and beyond the Silicon Valley. Besides the federal projects, there emerged greater innovations and creativity which saw the start of so many new innovative technology companies, which created many jobs within and beyond the Silicon Valley.

Source: Linden et al. (2003)

The case points out three major problems i.e., lack of trust, mutual and reciprocal relationships, consequently creating unfair competition for raw materials and markets, duplication of efforts, and lack of synergistic efforts to innovate and create employment opportunities. The fragmentation of over 7000 high-tech companies in over 27 cities was brought together through the creation of a joint venture known as the Joint Venture Silicon Valley (JVSV). The JVSV conducted regional workshops, conferences, incubation clinics, and relational interactions aimed at understanding their problems, negotiate solutions, create rules that governs them and agree on the collective needs of their community. As proposed by Greco (2013), it is through these actions that trust, mutual and reciprocal relations were restored amongst organizational members, enabling them to collaborate to become the World’s technology hub and the center for innovations consequently creating jobs for the Americans and other people in the World (Pahnke & Welter, 2019).

Therefore, creating employment opportunities may not require huge capital investments, rather mobilizing social capital resources such as trust, mutual and reciprocal relationships between the organizational members.

However, as observed by Birkland (2019), the social capital development and behavior of organizations in developing countries like Uganda is not well known due to insufficient scholarship. With consistent increase in the graduate unemployment problem in the country, it becomes imperative that social capital of the organizations responsible for the creation of graduate employment opportunities be critically examined with the view that its amenability to collaboration will create the desired synergy that is required in the creation of employment opportunities in the country.

Methodology

Using a cross-sectional survey design, the study utilized 105 responses from a population of 4324 leaders and managers of four distinct organizations. These organizations were purposely selected based on their direct contribution towards the creation of graduate

employment opportunities in the country. They include; Makerere University, which trains graduates in different disciplines and readies them for employment; Kampala Capital City Authority, a government agency whose mandate is to create trade order in the city; Enterprise Uganda is a Non-Governmental Organization whose mandate is to promote enterprise growth and development through credit facilitation, entrepreneurial training and advocacy; Nation Media Group is an Aga Khan business conglomerate, cross-listed on Uganda and Kenya's Security Exchange. It employs a number of youth graduates in its print and digital broadcast units.

Finally, from a purposive sample of 4 organizations, we conveniently selected 175 employees and leaders whose positions allow them to know issues of collaborations in their respective organizations. At least one respondent was selected from each of the key functional areas such as human resource, operations, accounting and finance, administration and ICT/engineering, giving us a total of at least five respondents from each department/directorate. The sample size was determined based on Krejcie and Morgan's formula for sample size determination (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). The representative sample lowered the costs and made the process of data collection faster and more convenient (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Table 1 shows the selected organizations and the sample selection for each unit as per the organization.

People's opinions on social capital and collaboration can be captured in both quantitative and qualitative terms. This is because some views can be quantitatively measured while others are very subjective. Quantitatively, we collected data using a survey questionnaire. The survey questionnaire is a type of data gathering method that is utilized to collect, analyze and interpret the different views of a group of people from a particular population (Nardi et al., 2014). In an attempt to measure the opinions or attitudes of respondents (Burns & Grove, 2010), a six-point Likert scale was used to obtain self-reported information on social capital components of trust, mutuality and reciprocity. We used a 6-point Likert scale because it does not suffer from response style bias (Dolnicar et al., 2011).

We collected qualitative data to capture the subjective nature of social capital and collaboration. Here, we used an interview guide which was developed after a comprehensive review of literature on social capital and collaboration. Equipped with the interview guide, we asked questions while recording the interview. Each interview lasted about 40–50 minutes. Data collected from this exercise was meant to complement the findings from the quantitative analysis.

We also carried out documentary analysis to examine the extent to which social capital is treated and documented in these organizations. We reviewed documents such as; the parliamentary acts, operational manuals, code of ethics, human resource and finance manuals, mission and objectives of the organizations, the strategic plan manuals, the memorandum and articles of association, particularly for private organizations.

The initial analysis phase involved the determination of the background information. Therefore, the first part of both the survey questionnaire and the interview guide contained the four questions regarding the background of the respondents are; respondents' gender, education levels, Duration of organizational service experience, and nature of organizations. This information is shown in Table 2.

Measurement of Variables

We measured social capital through its constructs. These are; trust, reciprocity and mutuality.

Table 1 Selected organization and the number of respondents per unit

SN.	Name of organization	Units/Departments	Number of respondents
01	Makerere University	Office of the Vice - Chancellors	5
		Office of the Academic Registrar	5
		College of Education & External Studies	5
		College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences	5
		College of Business & Management Science	5
		College of Computing & Information Science	5
		College of Engineering, Design, Art, & Technology	5
		College of Health Sciences	5
		College of Humanities & Social Sciences	5
		College of Natural Sciences	5
		College of Veterinary Medicine, Animal Resources & Bio-Security	5
		The School of Law	5
		Makerere University Business School	5
02	Kampala City Council Authority	Administration and HRM	5
		Physical Planning	5
		Treasury Services	5
		Engineering & Technical Services	5
		Public Health & Environment	5
		Education & Social Services	5
		Legal Affairs	5
		Revenue Collection	5
		Internal Audit	5
		Gender Community Services & Production	5
Office of the Executive Director	5		
03	Enterprise Uganda	Credit Facilitation department	5
		Training department	5
		Advocacy Team	5
		Monitoring & Evaluation	5
04	Nation Media Group	Monitor Publications	5
		NTV Uganda	5
		Spark TV	5
		K-FM	5
		Ddembe FM	5
TOTAL			175

Organization trust measured the extent to which organizations and their partners trusted each other in dealings that would make them collaborate. We measured it by the organization Trust Index, a tool developed by Cummings and Bromiley's (1996). It has questions such as, "This organization is always truthful in its dealings with partner organizations", "and I feel that this organization meets its negotiated obligations", "I feel that this organization negotiates with its employees honestly". These questions were anchored on a 6- point scale ranging from 1 = "not at all" to 6 = "to a greater extent."

Organizational reciprocity refers to the likelihood that an individual person will be there for another. It measures the extent to which organizations reciprocate their relationships.

Table 2 Distribution of respondents by gender, education, duration at work, and nature of the organization

Variable	Categories	Count	%
Gender	Male	61	58
	Female	44	42
	Total	105	100
Highest level of education	PhD	11	11
	Masters	25	24
	Postgraduate diploma	43	41
	Bachelors	10	10
	Diploma	4	4
	Advanced Level	3	2
	Ordinary Level	6	6
	Primary Level	3	2
	Total	105	100
	Duration of organizational service experience	Over 21 years	7
16–20 years		23	22
11–15 years		31	30
6–10 years		22	21
5 and below		22	21
Total		105	100
Nature of Organizations	Public	54	51
	CSO	30	29
	Private	21	20

We measured it according to the tools developed by Pope et al. (2013). These were 10 items that were developed through psychometric processes from a religious-based perspective. These questions were anchored on a 6- point scale ranging from 1 = “not at all” to 6 = “to a greater extent”. The measurement included questions like; “I feel that this organization cares about my needs as a human being”, “This organization supports me to do the things I enjoy”, “and the people I work with are willing to share their knowledge with me”.

Organizational mutuality defines the extent to which organizations are interdependent. Organizations that collaborate must experience mutually beneficial interdependencies based either on differing interests or on shared interests. Therefore, we measured organizational mutuality based on the Indianapolis Network Mental Health Study (1999) measures. Anchored on a 6- point scale ranging from 1 = “not at all” to 6 = “to a greater extent”, the questions probed from the respondents measured the extent to which mutual relationships existed between organizational members and between organizations.

Given the discreet nature of our data, we analyzed it using means, standard deviations, frequency counts, percentages, and Chi-square (goodness of fit). The data collected from the interviews was transcribed and subjected to content analysis. We also carried out documentary analysis. This involved review of statutory documents to obtain information on whether organizations document any issues related to social capital.

Findings

The creation of employment opportunities requires synergistic efforts from all the participating actors (Wiedner Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). This can only be achieved if organizations are designed in a way that sufficiently promotes trust, reciprocity and mutual

relationship with one another. Therefore, we collected data on the extent to which the organizations studied trusts, reciprocates and mutually relate with one another. The findings are summarized in Table 3.

Respondents were asked five questions on the issue of organizational trust. These questions broadly touched on three main areas. These are; truth, honest and negotiated obligations. Overall, findings indicate that majority (58 percent) were not truthful to their partner organizations. This was more pronounced among government organizations (68 percent) than in Private (38 percent) and the Civil Society Organizations (62 percent). On the issue of honesty, majority (57 percent) indicated that there was lack of honest negotiations between different parties. This was common among government organizations (74 percent) than in other organizational types. Finally, the majority (57 percent) indicated that organizations were characterized with failures to meet negotiated obligations with partner organizations. This characterization was more prevalent in government organizations (74 percent) than in other organizational types. The meaning here is that the surveyed organizations were not honest especially government organizations and therefore, without honest dealings with other organizations, collaboration may not be possible. To confirm these findings further, we carried out interviews from our key respondents who explained that:

“In this organization, we are careful to deal with those who may be interested in failing our mandates” (Head of Department from a public organization).

“I don’t trust the capabilities of other organizations. So, working with them might be difficult” (Human Resource Manager of a public organization)

“Our organization has its own mandate, different from others. Trusting others to pursue similar mandates means that we shall be out of business/work” (Manager, CSO).

We carefully corroborated the findings above with documentary analysis, particularly, the University and Tertiary Act (2000) which advocates for institutional independence and non-influence from external forces. The act presupposes minimal interactions with other stakeholders to avoid being influenced to divert from their statutory mandates consequently limiting their trust to share knowledge, information and physical properties which limits their collaboration.

Reciprocity had four items. Majority (77 percent) agreed that they were committed to achieving organizational goals, (54 percent) were willing to reciprocate care, (64 percent) agreed that they would share knowledge with other organizations and (51 percent) while (61 percent) disagreed that their remuneration was commensurate with their contribution at work. In all the categories, private organizations showed more willingness to reciprocate care (86 percent) and share knowledge (81 percent), than government and CSOs. This means that although organizations showed willingness to commit to organizational goals, reciprocate care and share knowledge, the general concern is the remuneration which employees say is not in tandem with their contribution. Ultimately, this reduces employees’ commitment to goals, reciprocal care, information sharing and relational interaction which fails the collaborative goals. These findings were corroborated more with interviews from key respondents who said that:

“There is little commitment to work in this organization due to poor remuneration” (Respondent from Government employee).

“I share information with other organizations selectively. I follow the information sharing act of 2005 to avoid collision with my superiors and the law” (Government employee).

Table 3 Organizational social capital

Variable	Attribute	Categories	Govern-ment		Private		NGO		Overall	X ²	Df	Sig
			N	%	N	%	N	%				
Organizational Trust	This organization is always truthful in its dealings with partner organizations	Strongly disagree	16	30	3	14	8	27	27	33.686	5	.00
		Disagree	17	31	4	19	7	23	28			
		Somewhat disagree	4	7	1	5	2	7	7			
		Somewhat Agree	3	6	0	0	3	10	6			
		Agree	9	17	9	43	9	30	27	26		
		Strongly agree	4	9	4	19	1	3	10	10		
		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105	100		
Organizational Trust	I feel that this organization meets its negotiated obligations	Strongly disagree	15	28	4	5	4	13	20	21.914	5	.01
		Disagree	17	32	6	19	6	20	27			
		Somewhat disagree	4	7	2	10	2	7	8			
		Somewhat Agree	4	7	5	5	5	16	10			
		Agree	8	15	11	42	11	37	28	27		
		Strongly agree	6	11	2	19	12	7	12	11		
		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105	100		
Organizational Trust	I feel that this organization is concerned about fulfilling its own objective regardless of the concerns of other organizations	Strongly disagree	7	13	1	5	2	7	10	25.692	5	.00
		Disagree	10	19	5	24	9	30	24			
		Somewhat disagree	1	2	1	5	2	7	4	4		
		Somewhat Agree	8	15	4	19	4	13	16	15		
		Agree	15	28	7	33	8	27	30	29		
		Strongly agree	12	23	3	14	5	16	20	19		
		Total	53	100	21	100	30	100	105	100		

Table 3 (continued)

Variable	Attribute	Categories	Government		Private		NGO		Overall	X ²	Df	Sig
			N	%	N	%	N	%				
I feel that this organization negotiates with its employees honestly		Strongly disagree	19	35	3	14	6	20	28	15.057	5	.01
		Disagree	12	22	4	19	2	7	18			
		Somewhat disagree	9	17	0	0	5	17	14			
		Somewhat Agree	6	11	5	24	9	30	20			
		Agree	8	15	7	33	4	13	19			
		Strongly agree	0	0	2	10	4	13	6			
		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105	100		
I feel that this organization is committed to its goals and objectives		Strongly disagree	6	11	0	0	1	3	7	54.486	5	.00
		Disagree	11	20	3	14	1	3	15			
		Somewhat disagree	1	2	1	5	0	0	2			
		Somewhat Agree	6	11	1	5	6	20	13			
		Agree	11	20	11	52	16	53	38			
		Strongly agree	19	35	15	24	6	20	30			
		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105	100		
Organizational Reciprocity I feel that this organization cares about my needs as a human being		Strongly disagree	20	37	2	10	3	10	25	18.714	5	.02
		Disagree	11	20	0	0	2	7	13			
		Somewhat disagree	6	11	1	5	4	13	11			
		Somewhat Agree	10	18	2	10	12	40	24			
		Agree	7	13	11	52	7	23	25			
		Strongly agree	0	0	8	5	24	2	7			
		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105	100		

Table 3 (continued)

Variable	Attribute	Categories	Govern-ment		Private		NGO		Overall	X ²	Df	Sig	
			N	%	N	%	N	%					Total N
This organization supports me to do the things I enjoy to do.		Strongly disagree	15	28	2	9	3	10	20	34.943	5	.00	
		Disagree	24	44	8	38	6	20	38				
		Somewhat disagree	8	15	2	10	3	10	13				
		Somewhat Agree	6	11	2	10	8	27	16				
		Agree	1	2	3	14	8	27	12				
		Strongly agree	0	0	4	19	2	7	6				
The people I work with are willing to share their knowledge with me		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105	100			
		Strongly disagree	12	22	2	9	2	7	16	15	14.600	5	.12
		Disagree	12	22	2	9	1	3	15	14			
		Somewhat disagree	3	6	0	0	4	13	7	7			
		Somewhat Agree	7	13	3	14	9	30	19	18			
		Agree	11	20	10	48	8	27	29	28			
This organization gives me remuneration that is commensurate with my contribution		Strongly agree	9	17	4	19	6	20	19	18			
		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105	100			
		Strongly disagree	14	26	1	9	3	10	18	17	15.285	5	.009
		Disagree	19	35	2	10	3	10	24	23			
		Somewhat disagree	3	6	5	24	4	13	12	11			
		Somewhat Agree	6	11	3	14	11	37	20	19			
Strongly agree		Agree	10	18	7	33	8	27	25	24			
		Strongly agree	2	4	3	14	1	3	6	6			
		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105	100			

Table 3 (continued)

Variable	Attribute	Categories	Government		Private		NGO		Overall	X ²	Df	Sig
			N	%	N	%	N	%				
Organizational Mutuality	The other organization I interacted with during the course of my work in this organization positively influence the way I perform my duties in this organization.	Strongly disagree	26	48	9	43	10	33	45	70.486	5	.00
		Disagree	17	31	7	33	2	7	26			
		Somewhat disagree	6	11	1	5	0	0	7			
		Somewhat Agree	2	4	1	5	11	37	14			
		Agree	3	6	3	14	5	17	11			
		Strongly agree	0	0	0	0	2	7	2			
Professional beliefs between my organization and partner organizations make it difficult for you to work together		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105			
		Strongly disagree	10	18	4	19	5	17	19	71.286	5	.00
		Disagree	16	30	15	71	17	57	48			
		Somewhat disagree	2	4	1	5	4	13	7			
		Somewhat Agree	3	6	0	0	2	7	5			
		Agree	8	15	1	5	2	7	11			
The way my organization and other organizations approach work makes it easy for me to work with those organizations		Strongly agree	15	28	0	0	0	0	15			
		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105			
		Strongly disagree	24	44	13	62	17	57	54	106.143	5	.00
		Disagree	16	30	3	14	5	17	24			
		Somewhat disagree	5	9	3	14	1	3	9			
		Somewhat Agree	2	4	1	5	2	7	5			
Strongly agree		Agree	4	7	1	5	4	13	9			
		Strongly agree	3	6	0	0	1	3	4			
		Total	53	100	21	100	30	100	105			

Table 3 (continued)

Variable	Attribute	Categories	Govern-ment		Private		NGO		Overall	X ²	Df	Sig	
			N	%	N	%	N	%					Total N
During the course of my work in this organization, I serve clients that are referred to us by partner organizations		Strongly disagree	29	53	12	57	20	67	61	149.114	5	.00	
		Disagree	18	33	5	24	2	7	25				
		Somewhat disagree	1	2	0	0	1	3	2	2			
		Somewhat Agree	2	4	1	5	3	10	6	6			
		Agree	2	4	2	9	2	7	6	6			
		Strongly agree	2	4	1	5	2	7	5	4			
During the course of my work in this organization, I refer clients to our partner organisations		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105	100			
		Strongly disagree	22	41	10	48	19	65	51	49	98.615	5	.00
		Disagree	17	31	7	33	3	10	27	26			
		Somewhat disagree	3	6	0	0	1	3	4	4			
		Somewhat Agree	2	4	1	5	3	10	6	6			
		Agree	5	9	2	9	2	7	9	9			
My organisation's goals and activities are similar to those of our partner organizations		Strongly agree	5	9	1	5	1	3	7	7			
		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	104	100			
		Strongly disagree	30	56	11	52	9	30	50	48	111.857	5	.00
		Disagree	17	32	6	29	11	37	34	32			
		Somewhat disagree	1	2	2	10	2	7	5	5			
		Somewhat Agree	3	6	0	0	5	17	8	8			
Strongly agree		Agree	2	4	2	9	3	10	7	7			
		Strongly agree	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	1			
		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105	100			

Table 3 (continued)

Variable	Attribute	Categories	Government		Private		NGO		Overall	X ²	Df	Sig
			N	%	N	%	N	%				
My organization's interests are similar to those of our partner organizations.		Strongly disagree	27	50	11	52	18	60	56	133.229	5	.00
		Disagree	20	37	7	33	3	10	30			
		Somewhat disagree	2	4	0	0	2	7	4			
		Somewhat Agree	3	6	2	10	5	17	10			
		Agree	1	2	1	5	2	7	4			
		Strongly agree	1	2	0	0	0	0	1			
Doing my work effectively in this organization requires support from our partner organisations.		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105	120.314	5	.00
		Strongly disagree	31	57	12	57	10	33	53			
		Disagree	16	30	4	19	12	40	32			
		Somewhat disagree	1	2	0	0	2	7	3			
		Somewhat Agree	2	4	2	10	2	7	6			
		Agree	3	6	2	10	2	7	7			
In the course of my work in this organization, partner organizations always use resources obtained from my organization to achieve the intended objective		Strongly agree	1	2	1	5	2	7	3	125.800	5	.00
		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105			
		Strongly disagree	30	55	12	57	9	30	51			
		Disagree	18	33	5	24	13	43	36			
		Somewhat disagree	0	0	0	0	2	7	2			
		Somewhat Agree	3	6	3	14	5	17	11			
Strongly agree		Agree	3	6	0	0	1	3	4			
		Strongly agree	0	0	1	5	0	0	1			
		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105			

Table 3 (continued)

Variable	Attribute	Categories	Government		Private		NGO		Overall	X ²	Df	Sig
			N	%	N	%	N	%				
In the course of my work in this organization, I always use resources of partner organizations to achieve the intended objectives		Strongly disagree	32	59	11	52	10	33	53	94.571	5	
		Disagree	16	30	7	33	13	43	36			
		Somewhat disagree	1	2	1	5	3	10	5			
		Somewhat Agree	2	4	1	5	2	7	5			
		Agree	3	6	1	5	2	7	6			
		Strongly agree	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
My organization always shares information with partner organizations		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105	100		
		Strongly disagree	24	44	11	52	20	67	55	121.457	5	.00
		Disagree	20	37	7	33	1	3	28			
		Somewhat disagree	6	11	1	5	2	7	9			
		Somewhat Agree	3	6	0	0	3	10	6			
		Agree	1	2	1	5	4	13	6			
I feel my organisation is appreciated by others in whatever we do.		Strongly agree	0	0	1	5	0	0	1			
		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105	100		
		Strongly disagree	29	54	13	62	20	66	62	150.943	5	.00
		Disagree	19	35	3	14	1	3	23			
		Somewhat disagree	3	5	1	5	3	10	7			
		Somewhat Agree	1	2	2	9	2	7	5			
Strongly agree		Agree	1	2	1	5	2	7	4			
		Strongly agree	1	2	1	5	2	7	4			
		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105			

Table 3 (continued)

Variable	Attribute	Categories	Government		Private		NGO		Overall	X ²	Df	Sig
			N	%	N	%	N	%				
I feel this organization achieves its own goals by working in harmony with partner organizations.		Strongly disagree	27	50	12	57	20	67	59	134.371	5	.00
		Disagree	18	33	5	24	1	3	24			
		Somewhat disagree	3	6	0	0	0	0	3	2		
		Somewhat Agree	1	2	1	5	5	16	7	7		
		Agree	3	5	2	9	2	7	7	7		
		Strongly agree	2	4	1	5	2	7	5	5		
I always feel that the relationship between my organization and other partner organizations is a win-win relationship.		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105	118.714	5	.00
		Strongly disagree	28	52	11	53	17	56	56			
		Disagree	17	31	5	24	2	7	24	23		
		Somewhat disagree	1	2	0	0	2	7	3	3		
		Somewhat Agree	3	5	2	9	3	10	8	8		
		Agree	5	9	2	9	4	13	11	10		
My organization and partner organizations celebrate their joint success regularly.		Strongly agree	0	0	1	5	2	7	3	141.686	5	.00
		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105			
		Strongly disagree	31	57	11	52	18	60	60	57		
		Disagree	17	32	5	24	2	7	24	23		
		Somewhat disagree	1	2	1	5	2	7	4	4		
		Somewhat Agree	3	5	2	9	5	16	10	9		
KEY: SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree, X ² = Chi-square, Df = Degree of freedom		Agree	1	2	1	5	1	3	3			
		Strongly agree	1	2	1	5	2	7	4	4		
		Total	54	100	21	100	30	100	105	100		

Documentary evidence reviewed indicates that organizations have rules and regulations on reciprocity. They restrict sharing of information, knowledge, tangibles, and any form of reciprocity that would promote any kind of relationship. Such was the case when we reviewed the operational manuals and the code of ethics of some government organizations and the Civil Society Organizations. The Operational manual of one of the government organizations read:

“Officials and employees shall not solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, any gift, gratuity, favor, entertainment, loan, or anything of monetary or non-monetary value as defined in the succeeding paragraph, from any person or juridical entities in the course of their official duties or in connection with any operation ...”

Organizations structured in such ways prohibit the development of reciprocal relationships, consequently failing any collaborative efforts between organizations that they would partner with each other to solve societal problems such as graduate unemployment.

Finally, the dimension of organization mutuality had 15 questions. Majority (90 percent) agreed to no sharing of resources for their daily activities, (84 percent) didn't believe in customer referrals, (91 percent) thought that professional beliefs cannot help organizations, (87 percent) indicated that they did not appreciate other's efforts in not only achieving their own goals but also in achieving societal needs, (79 percent) said that there was no win-win relationship with their partner and (84 percent) said that they did not do regular joint celebration of organizational success. We obtained similar findings from interviews who explained that:

“We do not share anything in common with other organizations. Our dealings are transactional (NGO respondent).

“We have a strict mandate to perform. It is highly unlikely that we would get interested in working with other organizations since they also have their own mandates” (Government respondent).

“My organization has fewer resources for our own operations. It is therefore impossible that we can share them with other organizations (private organization respondent).

The interviews indicate that there is less mutual relationship which impedes collaboration between different organizations, thus, achievement of collective needs is difficult. This is consistent with the results obtained from the quantitative analysis.

We conducted a chi-square goodness of fit test for trust, reciprocity and mutuality. The findings revealed that the data was a good fit on all items of organizational trust, mutuality and reciprocity. This means that there was a significant difference in the responses on all the items asked on all the variables.

In conclusion, there is a clear demonstration that there is limited trust, reciprocal and mutual relationship between organizations casting doubt over organization's readiness to collaborate and subsequently negotiate and synergize to create employment opportunities.

Discussions and Conclusions

The findings revealed that organizations responsible for the creation of graduate employment were not designed in a way that would promote high levels of trust, mutual and reciprocal relationships. Consequently, our findings reveal that due to such design, the surveyed

organizations were characterized with low levels of trust, mutuality and reciprocal relationship incapable of enhancing synergistic efforts that would be useful in tackling societal concerns such as the creation of graduate employment opportunities (Wang et al., 2020). This was corroborated by Bruneel et al. (2010) who found out that lack of trust, mutual relationships and reciprocity hindered university-industrial collaborations which consequently failed the synergistic working relationship between the universities and the labor markets to create employment opportunities. However, as pointed out by Narayan (2002), social capital does not exist in a vacuum, rather it is developed and carefully nurtured through people, processes and activities. This is possible when the structures are built in ways that support the interactions between people, systems and processes within and across organizational boundaries (Whetsell et al., 2020). When people interact, they develop trust, mutual and reciprocal relationships which helps them to collaboratively negotiate on the issues that collectively affect them. This is evident in developed countries where institutional democracy has promoted the interactions between people and their institutions, consequently creating trust, mutual and reciprocal relationships upon which organizations have collaborated to effectively solve their emergent problems.

However, organizations in developing countries like Uganda are characterized with centralized hierarchical decision making, high power distance and stringent rule observation which do not support the development of relational interactions between people, systems, processes and organizations. According to Ntale et al. (2020), organizations built in this way discourages the development of collaborative relationships and therefore, may not achieve much in solving problems that go beyond their individual abilities. Therefore, there is need to invest in actions that will create trust, mutual and reciprocal relationships among organizational stakeholders. These actions may include; redesigning organizations from centralized and hierarchical bureaucrats to relational-based structures which would promote people involvement and interaction on issues that affect their societies. For people to get involved and interact fruitfully, we propose that regular inter-organizational seminars and workshops, multi-agency social events and multi-agency trainings should be carried out.

Fortunately, two items of reciprocity (knowledge sharing and employee remuneration) were found to be amenable to collaboration, meaning that since organizations allowed information sharing, they could easily build on that to initiate cooperative relationships. This finding is corroborated with Liebowitz (2004) who found out that information sharing was a significant primer to the synergistic working relationship aimed at solving societal problems. Though this particular result is not surprising since it is happening in private and civil society organization where business is purely reciprocal and based on knowledge sharing, leaders in government organizations may benefit a lot if they redesign their organization to allow knowledge sharing and consequently, have a mutual and reciprocal relationships with one another. If government organizations embrace knowledge sharing and reciprocity at higher levels compared to private and civil society organizations, perhaps, collaboration between agencies may be enhanced.

Similarly, private and civil society organizations' employees agreed that their salaries were commensurate with their contribution at work unlike government employees who have continuously complained of poor salaries and some of them have gone as far as withdrawing their labor. Therefore, it may be difficult to collaborate with organizations whose employees are demotivated due to remuneration that is not commensurate to their contribution. It is therefore important that government organizations learn from private and civil society organizations such that they offer remuneration that is commensurate

to their employees to motivate them and allow easy and fruitful interactions with other organizations.

Practical Implications

Empirical evidence confirms that societies that have developed trust and mutually reciprocal relationships amongst each other have shown success in the way they respond to development challenges of their societies. This is more evident in developed countries where collaborative relationships between different parties are triggered in achieving effectiveness in tackling the challenges they face. For Kumar et al., (2016) and Sanchez (2012), it is not a mere triggering of collaborative relationship but it is a culture that is developed, trained, natured and enhanced over a period of time and is much engrained in the ways through which individuals, societies and nations respond to their day today challenges. According to Liebowitz et al. (2019), interpersonal and trust need to be established first before any knowledge sharing can take place on a continual basis. With developing nations such Uganda lagging behind in terms of education, health, employment opportunities and infrastructure development, adopting collaborative relationships in solving developmental challenges will reduce 1) duplication of effort, when different organizations do the same things albeit unjustifiably and with wastage of scarce resources; 2) contradiction of effort, when different organizations undo each other's contributions to the creation of employment opportunities for graduates; 3) gaps, when interventions that are key to alleviation of the graduate unemployment problem are not implemented because each of the organizations fighting graduate unemployment thinks that the other organizations are implementing these interventions when in fact this is not the case.

This requires training and maturing of collaborative relationships right from early career learners to graduates with the consequence that once in employment, they will be the champions of collaborative relationships at different levels of organizational structures. Trust, mutuality and reciprocal relational building should be part of the training to enhance collaborative relationships among the graduates. This calls for collaborative practice training where stakeholders from different professional backgrounds are brought together to learn, share knowledge, experience, resources and relational build up. When collaborative practice is started at early years of peoples' development, it becomes easier for individuals to develop trust, mutuality and reciprocal relationships with others, parameters that are highly required for collaborative relationships to develop at organizational level. It is important to note that this can only survive in organizations whose structures are designed to allow collaborative efforts. In situations where non-democratic structures exist, rigorous training on relational building should be carried out to undo the mistrust and non-reciprocal relationships that usually characterize such institutions (Ntale et al., 2020).

Relatedly, organizations are managed on ethical principles and compliance standards commonly known as codes of conduct, ethics codes, corporate ethics or value statements. When well documented, codified and strictly adhered to, they can easily foster trust and mutually reciprocal relationship between different organizational stakeholders, although, Koçyiğit and Akkaya (2020) warns that enforcement to adherence should be flexible so as not to refrain relationships with various stakeholders. Ethical principles and guidelines reduce tension which may arise due to non-compliance, directs each and every one to pursue his/her role, manages the emotions of different stakeholders and collaboratively brings people to work together for a common good. This creates organizational trust within and outside the

organization with which problems such as graduate unemployment can be solved. To achieve this however, Liebowitz (2021) contends that it is important that stakeholders are constantly reminded of the organizational ethics and principles through training, ethics audit, constituting ethics committees and hiring ethics and compliance consultants.

Building trust requires regular communication. Organizations must communicate policies, strategies, operational details to ensure organizational success and survival. This is done through formal and informal communications such as regular meetings, conferences, team check-ins, messaging, or stopping by co-workers' desks to chat about work-related and non-work-related topics. The same can be done across organizations. Frequent, positive communication are the building blocks of relationships that show your employees that you not only care, but you're listening and acting, which ultimately leads to trust upon which collaborative inertia can be built.

Organizational trust and mutually reciprocal relationships can be built by flattening of organizational structures with the aim of removing dictatorial tendencies and high power distance which usually strains collaborative relationships. Flattening organizational structures will improve communication between employers and their subordinates, increase both participatory and consultative decision making consequently improving trust and mutually reciprocal relationship between different stakeholders hence, aiding collaborative relationship upon which synergy may be created to solve societal problems such as the graduate unemployment problem.

Conclusion

Developed countries such as the United States of America, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom have had low levels of unemployment (Debelle & Laxton, 1997). Whereas different scholars attribute this to a number of macro and micro level interventions, Vangen et al. (2015) insists that collaboration of all these interventions through different organizations has presented a unique advantage to the success of interventions geared towards the unemployment problem by the developed nations. Unfortunately, developing countries like Uganda, characterized by high levels of unemployment and other attendant problems that would be solved by the synergistic efforts of different actors are still fragmented and isolated from each other making it difficult for trust, mutuality and reciprocal relationships to prevail among the partners, consequently disabling collaborative efforts. Therefore, there is need for trust, mutuality and reciprocal building interventions such that collaborative efforts may be developed and natured. This calls for training of both employees and leaders on the various aspects of building collaborative initiatives such as; collaboration negotiations, leveraging organizational differences, collaborative strategy formulation, environmental scanning, formulation of collective goals and objectives. These will help in changing the mind patterns of people from individualistic tendencies to collaborative interests with the consequence that collaborative interests will help them in building synergy, create knowledge, experience and resources that they can rely on to solve societal challenges such as graduate unemployment.

Declarations

Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest All authors certify that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

Research Involving Human Participants and/or Animals This study was performed in line with the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki. Approval was granted by the Research Ethics Committee (REC) of Makerere University on April 30, 2019.

Informed Consent Additional informed consent was obtained from all individual participants for whom identifying information is included in this article.

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